

**Blue Hill/Surry Transfer Station  
Solid Waste Committee Meeting  
Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at 4:00pm|Blue Hill Town Hall  
Minutes**

**Call Meeting to Order**

The Meeting was called to order at 4:03pm

1. **Quorum and meeting attendance** – S. Miller (Chair, BH), T. Welgoss (S), E. Best (BH), S. Dooley (BH), M. Allen (S, via online), J. Atwell (Town Administrator), D. Soper (Transfer Station Manager), M. Rockwell (Treasurer).
2. **Approval of minutes for September and October** – E. Best moved to accept the minutes as written for September and October; S. Dooley seconded. Vote 5/0 Approved.
3. **Sending Town Comment** – D. Riley from Brooklin addressed the committee concerning the transfer station closure on the Friday after Thanksgiving. The whole town was upset that the transfer station was closed. It was a big frustration for the community.
4. **Public Comment** – Liz and Josh from Blue Hill Disposal addressed the committee concerning transfer station closures. There needs to be good communication concerning closures. Josh serves five towns and said the trash doesn't stop. He held trash in his truck over the Veteran's Day holiday closure but was unable to do so over Thanksgiving due to the rain. D. Soper mentioned that he felt Saturday was far too busy and he had to answer a large volume of calls asking if the transfer station was open. There were a lot of upset community members. After witnessing D Soper deal with an irate customer, Liz mentioned that he should have some backup support from the Committee. The Committee advised that we should come up with a policy and advise the community that we have a three-strike rule. If you get three strikes you will not be allowed to use the transfer station.

Community members from Penobscot came to ask questions concerning contacts for various programs. They would like Penobscot to get more involved with recycling. They were looking for guidance and contacts to pursue their goals.

**Business**

1. **Transfer Station Manager Update**
  - a. **Repair/Replacement of commercial compactor** – Compactor has been ordered.
2. **Review of revenues/expenses** – The committee reviewed the budget and had a few questions for the treasurer. There was discussion concerning the DM&J contract. S Miller will review.
3. **Prospective changes to Blue Hill employee policies**
  - a. **Benefits** – The Town is revamping the employee handbook. They have established that thirty hours per week is considered full time and eligible for benefits. Health insurance will be paid for by the Town at 90% of the single rate and employees will be eligible at the beginning of the month following hire. There will be no overtime without prior approval. Comp time will have to be used in the week that it occurs unless the Town Administrator approves having it used

in the following week. There will be three weeks of paid time off and one week of sick time per year. Part-time employees will get one hour of paid time off for every 40 hours worked.

- b. Holiday closure schedule** – The Blue Hill Town Office observes 13 holidays in a calendar year and as of late the transfer station has followed suit. The Friday after Thanksgiving was tough for the community. There was discussion about offering paid time off versus certain holidays for the transfer station employees. Everyone attending agreed that the transfer station should be closed on New Year’s Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. A suggestion was made that we should be open on Sundays as well; however, DM&J does not pick up on the weekends. The Committee will discuss options later and come to a determination.
- 4. 2024 Budget** – S Miller is going to begin work on the 2024 budget. D Soper requested new bobcat tires and will make a complete list with estimates and provide it to S Miller. The budget will be completed prior to the January 31<sup>st</sup> deadline. As part of the discussion, the 2024 budget will include wages for additional part-time employees to cover vacation and sick time. There is a need for a part-time employee now and J Atwell will advertise the position.
- 5. Transfer Station Stickers for 2024** – The current stickers have an expiration date of December 31, 2023. The Committee asked M Rockwell to call participating towns and see how many stickers they have remaining. S Miller thought that we could ignore the expiration and continue to utilize the same stickers. If we need to order more, possibly keep the color the same and just remove the expiration. There was further discussion about having new stickers with no expiration and changing the color as the Committee and management felt necessary; not necessarily annually. J Atwell and D Soper will work together on this project.
- 6. Tire Storage**
  - a. Shipping container cost/location** – Chris Kowalski (Public Works Director for the Town of Blue Hill) contacted Maine Trailer and got a quote for a 40 yard container at an estimated price of \$4450. S Miller motioned to authorize the purchase of the 40 yard container at a price not to exceed \$5500; S. Dooley seconded. Vote: 4/0 Approved.
  - b. Tire disposal fees at other transfer stations** – D Soper contacted both Ellsworth and Bucksport transfer stations to find out their fee schedule for tire disposal. Ellsworth charges \$5 for a regular tire, \$10 for a regular tire on a rim, and \$20 up to \$100 for larger tires. Bucksport is free for residents. Currently we charge \$6 for a regular tire; \$10 for a regular tire on a rim and \$20 for larger tires.
- 7. Other Business** – Small claims court for returned checks. M Rockwell requested permission to pursue two business owners who have bounced checks to the tune of \$1352 and \$1106. The Committee agreed that we should proceed with small claims.

S. Dooley, J. Atwell and D Soper will work together to create a policy concerning uncooperative and demeaning citizens. It was suggested that D Soper would contact the Town Hall for a letter to be sent to any individual that he has had to address.

D Soper asked about repairing the lighting at the transfer station. The Committee advised him to go ahead and get the necessary repairs done.

## **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00pm.